

International



Newsletter

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Mayor's Office, City of Houston

Office of International Affairs & Development

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Message from the Mayor

It is always a great pleasure to share with you Houston's international developments. For this issue, I am particularly excited to announce the establishment of the seven Mayor's International Affairs & Development Councils (MIADC) for Africa, Americas, Asia, Canada, Europe, Middle East/ North Africa, and South Asia, regions that reflect the diversity of our great city. The councils, convening in January 2006, will work with me and the City Council to preserve and promote Houston's global standing.



Bill White

The value of our multi-faceted international communities and the many opportunities that they bring simply cannot be overstated. Thus, I believe that the MIADC will be a tremendous resource for the City.

Bill White, Mayor

Message from the Director

The rich diversity of Houston's culture and the enormous support of our community have laid the cornerstone of many international partnerships for the city.



Helen T. Chang

"You have truly been a great source of information and our Trade Mission would not be a success without your support.... We had a very productive and successful mission."

Leondria R. Thompson, executive vice president of the Tri-County Black Chamber of Commerce

At this special time of the year, as 2005 draws to a close, we wish you a happy holidays and a healthy, prosperous 2006.

Helen T. Chang, Director

November 2005 Highlights

Houston – Belize Connection, Trade Foundation for the Future

This past month, Tri-County Black Chamber of Commerce – International Initiatives Council (TCBCC – IIC) led a trade mission to Belize. The IIC recognizes that Houston's increasing role in international trade has become one of the key components for its economic viability. Under the coordination of TCBCC, Mayor H.E. David Fonseca of Belize City and Council Member Ronald C. Green of the City of Houston signed the *Partners in Trade Agreement* on formalizing channel between the two cities to better communication and share insights for success in meeting the challenges of global competition.

Did You Know?

Belize continues to rely heavily on foreign trade with the U.S. as it's number-one trading partner.

Source: www.state.gov

"The trade mission to Belize begins the process of building and establishing trade relationships between Belize and Houston's small business owners, whereby Belize being the only English speaking country in Central America will serve as a gateway for that market" states Gersham Fulcott, president of TCBCC.

– By **Leondria Thompson**

Special Thanks

Article submitted by Leondria Thompson, executive vice president of the TCBCC.

E.U. – U.S. Panel Discusses Eliminating Trade Barriers

At a breakfast meeting held on November 4 by the Greater Houston Partnership, Houston business leaders participated in a discussion about the state of Trans-Atlantic business affairs. The discussion featured a distinguished panel of speakers, including representatives of the British Embassy in Washington D.C. and the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Division, who presented information about the current status of the E.U. and U.S. trade relationship.

While 98% of trade flows unencumbered by tariffs or protectionist measures, the discussion highlighted some of the more passive barriers that still affect the E.U. – U.S. trade. In vital economic



The E.U. and the U.S. are working together to improve the quality of the already energetic trade, an effort that is expected to bring great benefits to Houston.

Did You Know?

Houston stands to gain much from the resolutions to the remaining trade issues; of the top 20 countries that trade with Houston, 7 are from Europe. With its prominence in the energy, medical and technology markets, as well as its active and thriving port, Houston has reaped the rewards for Trans – Atlantic relationship for many years, and will continue to play an active role over the years to come.

sectors like energy production and agriculture, these barriers take form of the extensive regulations and manufacturing standards that prohibit the free flow of trade. – By **Matthew Shailer**

Ribbon-Cutting Opens New Door to Our Northern Neighbors

On November 10, Canadian Ambassador to the United States of America Frank McKenna joined Mayor Bill White at City Hall in commemorating an official opening reception and ribbon cutting ceremony for the Canadian Consulate in Houston. The Honorable Diane Simsovic will serve as the Consul and Trade Commissioner of Canada in Houston. "Our northern neighbors are important trading partners for Houston in many ways, including in our vital energy sector," says Mayor White. "We are very pleased to welcome representation of Canada to our consular corps and look forward to continued cooperation."

"Thanks to NAFTA, for the past 6 years Canada has been the largest supplier of crude and refined oil products combined to the U.S.," says

Did You Know?

Under NAFTA, growth in bilateral trade between Canada and the U.S. has averaged almost 6% annually over the last decade.

Source: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>

Ambassador McKenna. "Houston-based energy companies are major investors

across Canada. The official opening of the Canadian Consulate in Houston recognizes the strong ties that already exist between Houston and Canada and increases opportunities for the relationship to grow in the future." – **By David Chang**



Consul General Jean-Michel Roy of Canada in Dallas, Consul Diane Simsovic, Mayor Bill White and Ambassador Frank McKenna are flanked by officers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Houston Police Department Mounted Patrol Division.

Texas Medical Center Expresses Gratitude to Consular Corps

The Texas Medical Center (TMC) hosted its annual luncheon honoring the Houston Consular Corps on November 10. The luncheon is a dual opportunity for the TMC to both demonstrate its appreciation for the services the Houston Consular Corps lend to expediting and facilitating the care process for international patients, and share the latest information regarding healthcare services provided by Houston hospitals.

Houston consulates, the 3rd most numerous in the nation, provide immeasurably valuable resources to the TMC in terms of translation services, visa processing and family contacts. The ascendancy of Houston as a premier international city, in conjunction with the TMC's world famous standard of healthcare, attracts many patients from countries and regions all over the world. The Houston Consular Corps and the TMC cultivate a relationship based upon mutual cooperation and information sharing, and it is this relationship that helps to make Houston a bastion of exceptional healthcare to the rest of the world. – **By Matthew Shailer**

Did You Know?

In 2004, 10,456 international patients visited the TMC for medical care. Many of the patients needed the aid of translators, information about legal issues and contact assistance provided by Houston Consulates in partnership with the TMC. The TMC, in possession of world-renowned research facilities, attracts thousands of international students per year, averaging about 50,000 a year in the late 1990's.

Source: www.tmc.edu

Islam and the West

Akbar Ahmed, a world-renowned authority on contemporary Islam, spoke at the Westin Galleria Hotel on November 18, an evening presentation hosted by the Asia Society of Houston about the often-misunderstood religion of Islam and its link to the West.

Houston's Asia Society, Pakistan Association of Greater Houston, and many other leaders of the Houston community received his charismatic presence. Professor Ahmed awed the audience with a

Did You Know?

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, also known as Quaid-I-Azam, founded Pakistan, one of the largest Muslim nation states in 1947.

Source: <http://www.storyofpakistan.com>

forgotten Islamic quote, "the ink of a scholar's pen is more precious than a blood of a

martyr." He highlighted the connection between Islam and democracy, and promoted education by suggesting reading books to replace mindless violence. His words inspired local Houstonians by giving them an understanding into a world otherwise misinterpreted. – **By Illy A. Jaffer**



Akbar Ahmed, chair of Islamic Studies and professor of International Relations (left) and G.R. Baluch (Right), consul general of Pakistan

Festival of Lights for Indo-American Progress

The Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of America (EVFA) celebrated Diwali with Mayor Bill White on November 12 at the Hilton Americas Hotel. Gathering more than 400 Houston community leaders, the celebration was filled with spectacular dances, music and speeches, all of which were teeming with the vibrancy of Indian culture.

Diwali was held this year under the theme "Support Education of Tribal Children in India," and the event primarily aimed to improve the literacy rates of children in India. Mayor Bill White noted the importance of the Foundation's dedication toward Indo-American community interactions. Two other speakers, Indian Consul General S. M. Gavai and CEO



A candle lighting by Mayor and Mrs. White with Houston philanthropist Jugal Malani.

Basant Tariyal of EV-Global highlighted the challenge that the issue of illiteracy presents to India.

The celebration portrayed the heart of the Houston – Indian community. Celebrants looked back to the many achievements that come from years of Indo-American community involvement in city life, and recognized the potential future impact of this international and outgoing population.

– **By Anne Lee**

Did You Know?

Diwali, festival of lights, traditionally lasts 5 days. The 3rd day of Diwali celebration is the actual day, Diwali. Over the duration of the festival, people wear vibrant apparels and reunite with family members and loved ones.

Source: <http://www.diwalifestival.org>

Shanghai District Governor Seeks Houston as Higher Education Partner

On November 14 – 15, Houston Mayor's Office hosted visitors from Shanghai. Deputy Governor Ma Jiefu and his colleagues of Yangpu District Government traveled to Houston as part of a fact-finding mission on the role of higher education and how it connects with the Houston business sector. During their 2-day stay, the delegation visited the University of Houston, Rice University and the Houston Technology Center.

Did You Know?

Yangpu District has high density in education. With 44 Academicians of the China Academy of Science and the China Academy of Engineers, 1,747 experts have received special honors by the State Council and more than 9,000 instructors and professors as well as nearly 130,000 students.

Source: <http://www.wboc.com>

Yangpu District, with over 1 million residents, is one of the 19 districts that comprise the Shanghai metropolitan area. Two of China's notable universities, Fudan University and Tongji University are located within the district, which bring the local government emphasis and interest in developing higher education.

– By Illy A. Jaffer



Visiting the Houston Technology Center, Deputy Governor Ma stands to the right of Ms. Michele Brekke, NASA Loaned Executive to the Houston Technology Center.

Houston Sees Balance in Quality Air Service and Safety

Today, as Houston grows on the world stage and millions of visitors travel to the city each year, city officials and community leaders are trying to extend the Texas hospitality to the weary traveler. On November 16, a roundtable discussion "Welcoming International Visitors to Houston" was held by the Rice University in the Founders Hall.

Of particular concern are the lengthy and sometimes difficult customs processes that international travelers must undergo. Nationally the average processing time per passenger stands at 38 minutes, whereas for Houston visitor it takes on average 35 minutes to get through customs, a lead that the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Port Director Harold Woodward says, can be improved upon while still maintaining the strong security standards. The discussion emphasized that travel-related obstacles can be reduced through proactive hiring of professionals to facilitate the challenges of the language barriers and increase airport communication.

– By Matthew Shailer

Did You Know?

George Bush Intercontinental Airport/Houston is the nation's 7th largest international passenger gateway. In 2004, more than 6 million international passengers passed through its gates.

Source: <http://iah.houstonairportsystem.org>

Beyond Power and Proximity: Forging a New Canadian-American Partnership

On November 10, the Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Frank McKenna, spoke to the Houston World Affairs Council at a luncheon. Ambassador McKenna highlighted that the relationship between the U.S. and Canada is of fundamental importance. Canada is not only the largest purchaser of American products, it is also the largest exporter of crude oil to the United States.

"I believe that when you look at the volatility that exists in our world today, I can't help but think that Canada and the United States provide a beacon of hope to the rest of the world. If we can get it right, two mammoth economies sitting side by side with almost 6,000 miles of unprotected border between us, surely other countries in the world can get it right as well. We have to continue to work [together] so that we provide that model, that model of two democracies with so much respect for each other that they are able to accomplish so much with so little acrimony," says Ambassador McKenna. – **By Joanne Howard**



"A great country like the United States of America deserves a great neighbor and we're trying to be that neighbor," says Ambassador McKenna.

Special Thanks

*Article submitted by Joanne Howard,
Houston World Affairs Council.*

Upcoming Major Events

Exemplary Qualities Recognized in Offshore Energy Awards

Qualities like leadership, development, and innovation are characteristics that all companies strive to embody in order to be more successful. In the constantly developing field of offshore energy production, these qualities are not just preferred – they are absolutely necessary. This December, Houston will host the 2nd annual Offshore Energy Achievement Awards honoring companies that have gone above and beyond in attaining business excellence.

Last year's amazing success of the Awards brought 300 guests together from around the world, honoring producers, drillers, technological-innovators, all those representing the gamut of Offshore production companies. This year Offshore Engineer, the event coordinator, hopes to surpass that success by bringing in more cooperation from companies around the world. 24 companies are nominated for 8 different awards that honor contribution within the field. The awards ceremony will be held December 8 at the Hilton American Hotel. For more information, please contact 713-535-1523.

– **By Matthew Shailer**

Did You Know?

At December 2002, ATP, the winner of the award, had leasehold and other interests in 50 offshore blocks, 29 platforms and 70 wells, including 6 subsea wells, in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. ATP operates 55 of these 70 wells, including all of the subsea wells, and 76% of our offshore platforms.

Source: <http://www.atpog.com/about.html>

I-69 Annual Meeting with Texas Governor

Sponsored by the Greater Houston Partnership, Alliance for I-69 annual meeting featuring Texas Governor Rick Perry will be held on December 8 at Houston Marriott Medical Center Hotel. An organization founded on the principles of expanded trade and connectivity, Alliance for I-69 functions to promote the construction of a highway corridor which would physically link several states to the Texas border with Mexico.

The annual luncheon will focus on a mixture of nuts and bolts issues governing the organization as well as emphasize goals and agendas shared by the members. Governor Rick Perry will highlight the importance of this project for the future economic development of Texas. For more information, please contact 713-844-3657. – **By Anne Lee**

Did You Know?

Established in 1994, Alliance for I-69 Texas has been implementing a master project to create the shortest route between the Northeast and South Texas. The I-69 represents the 8 states including Illinois to the northeast and Texas to the south. Once I-69 is completed, it will serve as a transportation artery within the largest states that comprise the largest segment of U.S. trade with Mexico and Canada.

Source: <http://www.i69texas.org>

Trade Mission to India

Early next year from January 14 – 21, Houston companies will have the opportunity to engage business in India, one of the fastest growing economies in the world, during the Greater Houston Partnership and the U.S. Department of Commerce Houston Export Assistance Center's India Trade and Development Mission.

Houston is uniquely positioned to benefit from the strong relationship with India due to its large population of Indian descent, and its concentrations of advanced technology and medical industries. Over 7 days, Houston companies will participate in government meetings and business-to-business exchanges in Delhi and Mumbai, laying the groundwork for future cooperation. India's rapidly developing high-tech and computer industries, as well as its growing need for energy resources provide Houston not only with a great potential market, but a future strategic partner in the trade of ideas and innovations. For more information, please contact 713-844-3635.

– **By Matthew Shailer**

Did You Know?

India was the 2nd fastest growing major economy in the world, with a GDP growth rate of 8.1% at the end of the first quarter of 2005.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org>

Special Announcement

Mayor White Calls Upon the International Community

Houston is famous for its oil and energy industry. However, as many of us know very well, Houston's business horizon extends across oceans and continents. 1 out of every 3 jobs in Houston is related to the international sector. 1 out every 12 Houstonians are born outside the United States. More than 3,400 firms and organizations trading 264 types of products and services reported international business activities in more than 200 countries. We receive over 100 international delegations (of all types) and over 15,000 international patients that visit the Texas Medical Center every year. There are 83 foreign consulates in Houston. In the course of pursuing trade with our global neighbors, the Port of Houston and the Houston Airport System alone produce a combined annual economic impact in excess of **\$50 billion** per year.

Mayor White, with the vision of enhancing Houston's global presence, is very pleased to announce the formation of the **Mayor's International Affairs & Development Councils (MIADC)**. The **Seven new councils**, wholly comprised from the international community, will focus upon the following regions of the world: **Africa, Americas, Asia, Canada, Europe, Middle East/ North Africa, and South Asia**. These seven councils will focus on creating strategies and implementing projects that will include, but are not limited to:

- Advise and assist the Mayor and City representatives on matters of international affairs and development of each international community's respective international regions that concern the growth of Houston as an international city, and with regard to regional sociopolitical issues affecting Houston businesses.
- Identify, investigate and establish methods and ways that will effectively capitalize opportunities in expansion and promotion of international trade for the Greater Houston region.
- Recommend and/or execute special projects that would be in the interest of Houston as an international city and mechanisms to enhance involvement of the international community in Houston's civic and cultural life.
- Establish methods and ways that will effectively work with Houston-area governing bodies, entities, and groups that are integral parts of Houston's international sector

The MIADC councils will convene their meetings in January 2006; Mayor White is fully confident that the councils, in working with the Houston-area international community, will be an invaluable resource to the preservation, promotion, and continued growth of Houston's standing as a renowned global city. For more information, please contact Mayor's Office of International Affairs and Development at 713-247-3595.

Sister City Spotlight – Guayaquil *Santiago de Guayaquil*

This month the International Newsletter will continue to showcase each one of Houston's 16 sister cities around the globe with a closer look at each distinctive locale. This month we feature Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Guayaquil, Ecuador became Houston's 10th sister city in 1987. Known as "Perla del Pacifico", or Pearl of the Pacific, Guayaquil is the financial and industrial hub of Ecuador and its largest city.

Located on both the Daule and Babahoyo rivers, Guayaquil is a mere 70 km from the ocean and, thus, in a prime location for maritime trade. In 2004, Houston's seaborne trade with Ecuador was valued over \$578 million. Additionally, air cargo trade between Houston and Ecuador was valued at more than \$10.2 million.

Important sectors in Guayaquil's economy include tourism, agriculture and petroleum. The latter is of particular importance. In the gulf of Guayaquil alone, it is estimated that there are gas reserves in excess of 300 million cubic feet. Subsequently, many of the largest petroleum companies have their regional bases in the city. Guayaquil's importance within the energy industry is one of its strongest ties with Houston.



Guayaquil museum district

The Houston-Guayaquil Sister City Association coordinates many programs focusing on health care, civic engagement, arts and culture. In 2004, the association twice hosted the Vice President of Ecuador opening the door to collaboration between Ecuador and Methodist Hospital. The collaboration with Medical Bridges and the Houston Fire Department coordinate the donation of medicine and medical and fire equipment respectively to Guayaquil.

The association hosts several cultural programs throughout the year including recitals and dance performances. These events have previously included visiting student performers from Guayaquil. Please contact the Houston

International Protocol Alliance at 713-227-3395 for more information about the association's upcoming activities and how to become involved. – **By Millie Canter and Alma D. Maldonado**

Did You Know?

Guayaquil is Ecuador's largest city with about 3,000,000 inhabitants. Situated at sea level its port "Puerto Maritimo" is the main sea port of the country where about 80% of the country's imports and more than 50% of its exports are handled. It is the commercial and industrial center of Ecuador and lies on the west bank of the river Guayas about 60 km from its outflow in the Gulf of Guayaquil.

Source: <http://www.inguayaquil.com/cityoverview.html>

Special Thanks

Article submitted by Millie Canter and Alma D. Maldonado, Houston International Protocol Alliance.

Meet the Consular Corps in Houston

Indonesia *Republik Indonesia*

This month we go to the world's largest archipelago to speak with The Honorable Benny Permadi Suryawinata, Indonesian Consul General in Houston, to discuss everything from mutual support and aid to trade partnership.



Consul General Benny Permadi Suryawinata

The floating emerald islands of Indonesia have been a paradise destination for countless numbers of travelers in the past. It was just a year ago, however, that these paradise isles were confronted with Tsunami, a natural fury that took the lives of hundreds of thousands. Since that time

Indonesia has made hopeful progress in overcoming the devastation brought by the Tsunami and demonstrated that international partnerships can turn a natural catastrophe into a triumph of the human spirit.

Raising almost \$100,000, plus supplies, Houston city leaders and citizens gave time and heart to coordinate outreach efforts. Similarly, when communities along the American Gulf Coast suffered from the wrath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita earlier this year, Indonesia offered substantial assistance. The Honorable Benny Permadi Suryawinata, Consul General of Indonesia, is truly delighted of the growing friendship between Houston and Indonesia. Of course the Houston-Indonesia connection extends beyond aide and support. Indonesia is a net oil exporter, and is well involved in energy investment. "Houston and Indonesia have a lot to offer each other, there should be a larger array of energy investors attracted to Houston, and in turn more investors of infrastructure traveling to Indonesia." Consul General Suryawinata sees a great future for the two economies that will come with future cooperation. The vast polyglot nation of Indonesia is home to healthy economic growth, and as of early late last year Indonesia had attained a growth rate of about 5.1% and is projected to increase further in the next year. "I am confident that our relationship will strengthen because there are no

barriers holding back the ties between Houston and Indonesia," says Consul General Suryawinata.



Map of Indonesia

As a Consul General of 11 states, including the two territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Consul General Suryawinata constantly travels within the respective states in support of the various Indonesian communities and interests. Beginning his diplomatic career in 1980, and although this is only his first year posted in Houston, Consul General Suryawinata boasts that Houston has been the most dynamic place he has lived.

With over 3,000 Indonesians in Houston alone, Consul General Suryawinata attends to a variety of responsibilities over a large geographic area. The pride he shows in Houston, his people, his country, and the many duties of the consulate office, prove that Consul General Suryawinata is the perfect man for the job.

– **By Monica M. Faridi**

International Hub: The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau



Gerard J. "Jordy" Tollett, president and CEO of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHCVB) is the primary sales and marketing arm of the city of Houston and Harris County. The mission of the GHCVB is to improve the economy of Greater Houston by attracting conventions, tourists and international government officials to the area through sales and marketing efforts. The ten departments of the GHCVB achieve this goal.

Since 2002, Gerard J. "Jordy" Tollett devotes his full attention to the business of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, currently serving as the president and CEO of the GHCVB. For more than 20 years, dating back to 1981, Jordy Tollett was director of the City's Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department, overseeing operations at prominent Houston landmarks such as the George R. Brown Convention Center, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall and a host of other properties and parking facilities.

Each year, the *Convention Sales department* book the greatest possible number of hotel room nights generated from tradeshow, conventions and meetings. Recent international conventions held in Houston are La Cumbre, with 1,200 delegates from Latin America, and the annual Offshore Technology Conference, which brings in about 8,000 international delegates each year.

Special Thanks

Article submitted by Lindsey F. Brown, deputy director of marketing, Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Did You Know?

The **Convention Services department** works with the meeting planner to provide a wide range of service once a meeting is booked.

The **Houston International Protocol Alliance** is the office of protocol and international affairs for the city of Houston and facilitates all aspects of Houston's relations with the international community.

The **Tourism department** is charged with increasing travel to the Greater Houston area by individuals and tour groups, as well as increasing attendance to area hotels, attractions and restaurants.

The **Houston Film Commission** promotes Houston, Harris County and the Eastern Gulf Coast region of Texas as a destination for film production and provides professional location services to film, video and print industries.

The **Houston Visitors Center**, the world's largest, is a wealth of information for both visitors and Houstonians.

The **Communications department** promotes the Greater Houston area through advertising, public and media relations, sponsorship, special events, promotions, Web site and collateral development.

The **Membership department** is responsible for maintaining and retaining GHCVB members.

The **Houston Image Group (HIG)** serves as the international marketing arm for the GHCVB and works to establish HIG as a key media source.

The support mechanism for day-to-day business operations of the GHCVB is the **Finance and Administration department**, whose responsibilities include financial management, human resources, office management and technological resources.

The Global Bridge: African – American Chamber of Commerce

Each month the International Newsletter will feature a section “The Global Bridge” introducing the chambers of commerce in Houston dedicated to promoting Houston’s international image.



*Earl B. Loggins,
chairman of the
Board*

The Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce helps the African-American business community to succeed in today’s fast growing economy. It was formed in 1935 by a group of businessmen and women who saw the need to strengthen our community, improve the quality of life, and promote business growth within the greater Houston area.

The HCCC reflects the vision of African-American businesses, professionals, and organizations who worked together to open doors to opportunities within the business world. Its goal is to aid African-American businesses that have impacted their communities and the business world. HCCC also helps prepare our future business and community leaders by presenting the Education Achievement Scholarship Award, which provides outstanding students with college scholarship funds.

Each year the Education Committee of HCCC seeks to encourage community and corporate support programs of education and manpower development. These programs prepare people for participation in the world of work, effective living and community leaderships.

HCCC now has an International Trade Division that explores business opportunities abroad and educates African-American businesses in new, innovative ways of growing globally. The Community Affairs division is enhanced by partnering with the Port of Houston Authority, Texas Southern University and

other organizations to increase the visibility of the community, inform small business about economic changes and opportunities in Houston and improve economic and social growth in the community.

Serving as the organization’s first Board Chairman, Earl B. Loggins’ tenure began January of 1982. Loggins is a native Houstonian. He later attended Cornell University in New York and received a Supervisory Management Degree. His 44-year career at the Club took him from Maitre d’, to Host-at-large, and ultimately Director of Training. “It is an honor to have the opportunity to lead one of Houston’s oldest community service organizations. We are trying to take advantage of opportunities through networking with others to discover a new arena for creating new business opportunities and innovative ways to enhance entrepreneurial success. I believe we will continue to be successful!” says Earl B. Loggins.

Houston City Magazine cited Earl as one of Houston’s 20 most influential personalities. The Houston Chronicle lauded him as “one of those personalities who rarely make headlines but make daily contributions to the city.” The Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce is happy to have him.

Special Thanks

*Article submitted by the African –
American Chamber of Commerce,
Houston Citizen Chamber of
Commerce.*

International Frontier – John Hofmeister

Every month we focus on a Houstonian who has made an indelible mark on our city through outstanding contributions and services to the growth of Houston as an international city.



*John Hofmeister,
President, Shell Oil
USA and U.S.
Country Chair*

As the U.S. Country Chair of the Fortune Global-500 Shell Oil Company, Mr. John Hofmeister is very familiar with the importance of building a global vision. Shell USA, as an active supporter of numerous international-focused

events in Houston, has strived to elevate the global consciousness in our communities.

After receiving his bachelor's and master's degrees from Kansas State University, he spent 24 years with General Electric's Lighting Business, Northern Telecom, and AlliedSignal. Mr. Hofmeister joined Shell in 1997 as the Vice President for International Human Resources at The Hague, Holland.

Given that his career has taken him to far-flung locales of the world, the things that strike Mr. Hofmeister about Houston are the friendliness, openness and hospitality of Houstonians, and the enormous potential of the metropolitan region – and the fact that Houston has essentially no zoning laws. "Right away, I noticed the Interstate 45 corridor; it, and I mean this in a very positive sense, was a un-zoned hodgepodge of activity!" he chuckles.

His initial observations aside, Mr. Hofmeister feels that Houston is heading in the right direction, with the city's

myriad of demographic, technological, and business dynamics feeding the continued development of the region. He stresses that the growth, while indicative of Houston's vigor, must be planned with a sense of cohesiveness and unity. "Growth for our city, undoubtedly, is spread in a broad spectrum. Key issues such as public and private education, transportation and mobility, quality-of-life, conservation and the environment, urban and rural sustainability concerns, tax-base management, and industrial sectors of the future (e.g. aerospace, medical science, biotechnology, energy, nanotechnology, information management, etc); they all point to a future that is too big and too interconnected to be addressed separately." Hofmeister continues, "I know many of us are very aware of these areas, but I believe it is critically important and bears mentioning to your readers."

Planning and implementing for Houston's future may seem daunting, but Mr. Hofmeister offers the following as a closing personal observation: "I am very excited at the diversity, spirit of inclusiveness [in community, industry, academics, cultural], and the international outlook of the city as a whole," he says, "the leadership of the city, county, and other governing-entities of the Houston area, have also greatly impressed me in such a short span of time." – **By David Chang**

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**Next Submission Deadline:
December 20, 2005**

December – 2005 Event Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Venue/Contact	
Dec 1	3:00pm-5:00pm	American Institute of Architecture (AIA) Houston: Geotechnical, Forensic, and Environmental Issue with Houston Building	Venue:	Koch Building 20E. Greenway Plaza
			Contact:	713-520-0155
Dec 1	7:30am	Houston Networking News: Monthly Breakfast Event	Venue:	Amazon Grill
			Contact:	281-778-6661
Dec 1	11:30am-1:00pm	Greater Houston Partnership: HCC Civic Engagement	Venue:	HCC (5601 West Loop)
			Contact:	713-844-3621
Dec 2	10:00am	Japan-America Society of Houston: Language Culture KAI Sidewalk Shopping Spree	Venue:	4801 Woodway
			Contact:	713-963-0121
Dec 2	11:30am-1:30pm	City of Houston Mayor's Office and Houston World Affairs Council: Building Educational Bridges between the United States and China featuring Vice Minister of Education luncheon	Venue:	InterContinental Hotel
			Contact:	Helen Chang 713-247-3595
Dec 2	6:00pm	Japan-America Society of Houston: 4 th Friday Film Series (JASH Movie Night)	Venue:	4801 Woodway
			Contact:	713-963-0121
Dec 2	7:00am-9:00am	Houston Technology Center: HTC Technology Champions Meeting	Venue:	HTC
			Contact:	713-658-1750
Dec 4	6:30pm	The Thai Alliance in America: The Thai Alliance in America Spirit of Leadership Awards	Venue:	Westin Galleria Hotel
			Contact:	713-828-4675
Dec 4	5:30pm	Cambodian Society: Celebrating 30 Years Cambodians in America	Venue:	Kim Son (2001 Jefferson)
			Contact:	713-365-9212
Dec 5	--	City of Houston Mayor's Office: Delegation led by Division Chief of Beijing Municipal Office of Information	Venue:	--
			Contact:	Helen Chang 713-247-3595
Dec 5,7	9:00am-1:00pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: Spawglass Training Seminar	Venue:	Houston Chapter AGC (3825 Dacoma)
			Contact:	713-843-3700
Dec 6	11:30am-1:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Notes from Afghanistan, A corporate Monk in Kabul	Venue:	The Magnolia Hotel
			Contact:	713-522-7811
Dec 7	5:30pm-7:30pm	Greater Houston Partnership: Annual Elected Officials reception	Venue:	Trevisio
			Contact:	Allyson LaFave 713-844-2623
Dec 7	7:30am-9:00am	Greater Houston Partnership: Texas Higher Education Star Award Recipients Breakfast	Venue:	GHP (1200 Smith)
			Contact:	713-844-3621
Dec 7	6:00pm-8:00pm	Women in Technology International: Regional Network Event	Venue:	Farrago
			Contact:	cats@houston.rr.com
Dec 7	9:00am-3:30pm	Skyline Displays of Houston: Profitable Exhibiting Seminar	Venue:	5215 Ted Street
			Contact:	713-939-1073 (ext.104)
Dec 7	5:30pm-7:30pm	Asia Houston Network: Holiday Reception	Venue:	Zake Japanese Restaurant
			Contact:	713-385-8123

Dec 8	Noon	Alliance for I-69 Texas: I69 Annual Meeting and Luncheon featuring Texas Governor Rick Perry	Venue:	Houston Marriott Medical Center
			Contact:	713-844-3657
Dec 8	7:30pm	Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston: Annual Meeting and Thank you Event	Venue:	Congregation Emanu El
			Contact:	713-533-4975
Dec 8	11:30am-1:30pm	Greater Houston Partnership: Professional Services Council Networking Luncheon	Venue:	Inn at the Ballpark
			Contact:	713-844-3694
Dec 8	6:30pm-9:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts, Houston & Consulate General of Japan at Houston: Japanese Evening	Venue:	Caroline Weiss Law Building
			Contact:	713-639-7820
Dec 9	11:30am	Japan-America Society of Houston: Ladies Holiday Luncheon	Venue:	Royal Oaks Country Club
			Contact:	713-963-0121
Dec 9	11:30am	The Houston Voter: Holiday Luncheon Honoring all New Elected Houston Officials	Venue:	The Briar Club
			Contact:	713-784-2923
Dec 10	--	Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund: Teacher Program Applications Available and Due	Venue:	TBD
			Contact:	www.fulbrightmemorialfund.jp
Dec 10	9:00am-noon	Blue Print Houston: "Bring New Orleans Back" Commission Town Hall Meeting	Venue:	George Brown Convention Center
			Contact:	713-349-8821
Dec 14	11:30am-1:15pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: December Monthly Luncheon – Trends Begun and Continued in 2005	Venue:	Westin Galleria Hotel
			Contact:	713-782-7222
Dec 14	6:00pm-7:30pm	Houston World Affairs Council: America's Opportunity	Venue:	The Junior League
			Contact:	713-522-7811
Dec 14	11:30am-1:15pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: A Review of 2005 Trends	Venue:	Westin Galleria Hotel
			Contact:	713-782-7222
Dec 14	6:00pm-9:00pm	Success in the City: Chrysalis Award Dinner and Reception	Venue:	The Briar Club
			Contact:	281-391-2636
Dec 15	11:30am-1:00pm	Japan-America Society of Houston: An Economy in Transaction	Venue:	811 Rusk, 10 th floor
			Contact:	713-963-0121
Dec 16	noon	Greater Houston Partnership: State of the Airports Address Luncheon	Venue:	Hyatt Hotel
			Contact:	713-844-3658
Dec 19	Noon – 1:30pm	Greater Houston Partnership: State of the Senate Address featuring U.S. Senator John Cornyn	Venue:	Hyatt Regency Houston
			Contact:	713-844-3657
Dec 21	8:00pm-1:00am	The Ambassadors' Club: Professionals helping Professionals	Venue:	Hilton Hotel Post Oak
			Contact:	713-977-4923
Dec 31	7:30pm-1:00am	Asian Chamber of Commerce: New Year's Eve Gala	Venue:	InterContinental Hotel
			Contact:	713-784-1112

We have one simple goal: to promote Houston as a renowned international city.

The contents are intended for general information purposes only.